Augustine, the former gnostic, and his many heretical views

Augustine, a former gnostic, lived between 354 and 430 AD, and introduced the following heretical views into church and made them popular

1. Absolute predestination (God decides who will be saved/doomed)
2. Impossibility of falling away or apostasy (Eternal Security)
3. Man has no free will (monergism)
4. One cannot know if he/she is saved (since also those who are carnal minded might be saved)
5. God commands impossibilities (God requesting man to stop sinning which he cannot do)
6. The supreme authority of the Roman church
7. Purgatory
8. Prayers for the dead
9. The damnation of unbaptized infants and adults
10. Sex is sinful also within a marriage because depravity is inherited (hence the rise of monasteries)
11. Mary never committed sin, and we do well to worship her/pray to/through her
12. The gifts of healing, prophecy and tongues have ceased
13. Apocrypha is included in the Scriptures
14. Eucharist is necessary for salvation
15. Giving people the official “saint” title

Unlike Pelagius, Augustine didn't understand much Greek. The historian Neander observed that Augustine's teaching *"contains the germ of the whole system of spiritual despotism, intolerance, and persecution, even to the court of the Inquisition"*. He instigated bitter persecutions against the Bible-believing Donatists who were striving to maintain pure churches after the apostolic faith.

Augustine interpreted Bible prophecy allegorically; among other things teaching that the Catholic Church is the kingdom of God.

Augustine was one of the fathers of the heresy of infant baptism, claiming that unbaptized infants were lost, and calling all who rejected infant baptism "infidels" and "cursed".

Augustine exalted church tradition above the Bible and said*,"I should not believe the gospel unless I were moved to do so by the authority of the Catholic Church".*

He was among the first who taught a-millennialism and that the nephilim were descendents of Cain instead of (as the Bible says) a mixture of angels and female human beings.

Augustine said:

"By Adam's transgression, the freedom of" the human will has been completely lost."

"By the greatness of the first sin, we have lost the freewill to love God."

"By subverting the rectitude in which he was created, he is followed with the punishment of not being able to do right" and "the freedom to abstain from sin has been lost as a punishment of sin."

According to Wikipedia we can learn:

He was contemporary with Jerome and Ambrosius. In his early years he was heavily influenced by Manichaeism and afterward by the Neo-Platonism. Although he later abandoned Neoplatonism some ideas are still visible in his early writings. After his conversion to Christianity, Augustine developed his own approach to philosophy and theology, accommodating a variety of methods and different perspectives. He believed that the grace of Christ was indispensable to human freedom, and he framed the concepts of original sin and *just war.*

When the Western Roman Empire was starting to disintegrate, Augustine

developed the concept of the Catholic Church as a spiritual City of God (in a book with the same name). The Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion view him as an pre-eminent Doctor of the Church, and the patron of the Augustinian religious order. Many Protestants, especially Calvinists, consider him to be one of the theological fathers of Reformation. Much of Augustine's later life was recorded by his friend Possidius, bishop of Calama (present-day Guelma, Algeria), in his Sancti Augustini Vita. Possidius admired Augustine as a man of powerful intellect and a stirring orator who took every opportunity to defend Christianity against its detractors. Reformed theologians such as Martin Luther and John Calvin would look back to him as their inspiration.

Compared with Augustine, Pelagius was way more consistent with the Bible and shared the same Bible interpretation as the church fathers before him. (Read more about him in another blog post in the same Category.)

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